# 2021 Regular Session

#### HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 73

# BY REPRESENTATIVE COUSSAN

### WILDLIFE/HABITAT: Urges and requests the collaboration of certain departments with the Louisiana Waterfowl Working Group to improve waterfowl habitats on private, state, and federally owned lands

1	A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
2	To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, the Natural
3	Resources Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, and
4	the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to collaborate and contribute their
5	knowledge and expertise with the Louisiana Waterfowl Working Group in an effort
6	to improve waterfowl habitats on private, state, and federally owned lands.
7	WHEREAS, Louisiana has a long and distinguished history of consistent, reliable
8	wintering waterfowl habitat for generations; and
9	WHEREAS, waterfowl biologists estimate seed production in moist-soil wetlands
10	located along migration routes and at wintering sites to calculate duck-energy days; and
11	WHEREAS, duck-energy days are the number of dabbling ducks that potentially can
12	be sustained energetically in a wetland for a specified duration; and
13	WHEREAS, the Louisiana portion of the Chenier Plain Initiative area (CPIA) has
14	a midwinter population objective of over eight hundred and eighty-eight thousand Gadwall
15	and three hundred seventy-eight thousand Blue-winged teal duck-energy days; and
16	WHEREAS, the Louisiana portion of the west gulf coastal plain has a population
17	goal of one million seven-hundred thousand duck-energy days of all species; and
18	WHEREAS, the Mississippi River Coastal Wetlands Initiative area (MRCWIA)
19	encompasses important wintering waterfowl habitats including Pass A Loutre, Atchafalaya
20	Delta Wildlife Management Area, Marsh Island, and Delta National Wildlife Refuge; and

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1	WHEREAS, the Louisiana portion of the Mississippi Alluvial Valley of the Lower
2	Mississippi Valley Joint Venture has a total duck-energy day objective of one-hundred
3	twenty million nine hundred thousand duck-energy days based on a one hundred ten day
4	wintering period from early November to late February; and
5	WHEREAS, Louisiana supports over half of the breeding population of western gulf
6	coast mottled ducks; and
7	WHEREAS, over four hundred seventy-five thousand acres of rice were planted by
8	Louisiana farmers in 2020, down from a high of six hundred seventy thousand acres in 1981;
9	and
10	WHEREAS, the Gulf Coast Joint Venture has also determined that coastal marshes
11	in the CPIA and MRCWIA are deficient in providing habitat to support their waterfowl
12	population objectives; and
13	WHEREAS, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) owns and
14	manages more than one million six hundred thousand acres of Louisiana's land and
15	waterways as wildlife management areas, refuges, and conservation areas; and
16	WHEREAS, the Fish and Wildlife Service of the Department of the Interior of the
17	United States (FWS) manages twenty three national wildlife refuges within Louisiana,
18	covering more than five hundred fifty thousand acres throughout twenty-nine parishes; and
19	WHEREAS, the Natural Resources Conservation Service of the United States
20	Department of Agriculture (NRCS) has a long record of working with private landowners
21	to implement conservation practices and programs for the benefit of Louisiana's farms,
22	wetlands, and wildlife habitats, and
23	WHEREAS, the Louisiana Waterfowl Working Group (LWWG) is comprised of a
24	diverse group of landowners, managers, business owners, and professionals who share a
25	common interest and concern over the direction Louisiana's waterfowl stock is heading; and
26	WHEREAS, the LWWG's mission is to ensure that waterfowl habitat remains a focal
27	point for policy makers and stakeholders at all levels.
28	THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
29	urge and request the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, the National Resources
30	Conservation Service, and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to collaborate and

1 contribute their knowledge and expertise with the Louisiana Waterfowl Working Group in 2 an effort to improve waterfowl habitats on private, state, and federally owned lands. 3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the LWWG shall submit an annual written report 4 to the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment and Senate Committee on 5 Natural Resources detailing the results of its collaborative efforts to improve waterfowl 6 habitats on private, state, and federally owned lands. 7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the report should consider meaningful updates 8 on habitat trends, policy recommendations, and other relevant topics related to Louisiana 9 waterfowl, and the habitats they depend upon. 10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the 11 secretary of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, the Natural Resources 12 Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, Louisiana State 13 Conservationist, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service Region 4 Director, and the 14 officers of both houses of the United States Congress and each member of the Louisiana 15 congressional delegation.

# DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

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Urges and requests the La. Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries, the Natural Resources Conservation Service of the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to collaborate and contribute their knowledge and expertise with the La. Waterfowl Working Group (LWWG) in an effort to improve waterfowl habitats on private, state, and federally owned lands. Requires the LWWG to submit an annual written report to the House and Senate natural resources committees detailing its findings.

#### Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by <u>House Committee on Natural Resources and</u> <u>Environment</u> to the <u>original</u> bill:

1. Require the La. Waterfowl Working Group to submit a report of its findings annually rather than by March 1, 2022.